CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

ODP # 8-835

21 April 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Harry S. White, Jr.
Associate Director for ADP Standards
National Bureau of Standards
U.S. Department of Commerce
(Wash, D.C. 20234)

STATINTL

FROM : ███████████████

Deputy Director for Applications
Office of Data Processing

SUBJECT : Coordination of Proposed Guidelines for
Documentation of Computer Programs and
Automated Data Systems for the Initiation
Phase

REFERENCE : Your Memo, Same Subject, Dated 10 March '78

1. We have reviewed your paper on the guidelines
for the documentation of computer programs during the
initiation phase and it is surprising how close your
standards come to our actual practices. Our users request
work with a form that is very similar to your Project
Request Document. We also conduct feasibility studies on
all systems where it is not clear what direction the
computer support should take.

2. The one comment I would make about the feasibility
study is that in Section 3, which is System Requirements
and Objectives, you specify more detail than we generally
put in a feasibility study. I am not convinced that, for
example, the detailed description of each file and its
edit criteria helps the user choose amoung the various
alternatives presented in the study. We have also found
that the choice of alternatives in a feasibility study can
greatly affect how the user inputs data, the format of the
files, and the type of output that he gets. For these
reasons we postponed this type of detail until the next
formal document that goes to the user. This would occur
in the definition phase of the development stage. For

example, the user might be presented with an on-line option and a batch processing option. The output specifications for hard copy reports can not be specified until the choice is made between the two options.

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